

Flight Jacket

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Marine Corps Air Station Miramar

March 30, 2001

MAG-11 deploys largest number of Marines since Gulf War

By Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Ten years ago one Marine aircraft group here deployed nearly 1,000 Marines to fight a battle in the desert.

For the first time since Operation Desert Shield that same group has now deployed even more Marines to the Persian Gulf and the Orient.

In the first week of March, Marine Aircraft Group 11 has three of its squadrons scattered to the winds supporting Joint Task Force Southwestern Asia, Operation Southern Watch and a Western Pacific deployment. Almost 1,000 Marines with nearly 40 aircraft are deployed.

According to Lt. Col. David R. Leppelmeier, MAG-11 assistant operations officer, the biggest challenge was the logistics of getting everything prepared for the mass deployment.

"VMFA-323 had to completely move out of their hangar because it was being renovated and move to the USS Constellation," he said. "Logistically that's a big thing."

Death Rattler Marines had five semi-tractor trailers filled with equipment, which had to be transferred to the aircraft carrier. To prepare for their deployment to the Arabian Gulf, VMFA-323 Marines had to overcome three rigorous work-up exercises – two on the carrier and one at Naval Air Station Fallon, Nev. They also completed a Marine Corps Combat Readiness Evaluation – where the pilots flew 70 sorties in all different mission areas like air-to-air and air-to-ground combat. Leppelmeier also said that squadron Marines had four separate aircraft-carrier qualifications so the pilots would be prepared for what lay ahead.

One of the largest obstacles the Group faced involved the Marines of Marine Air Logistics Squadron 11. A detachment of Devil Fish Marines was sent with each Hornet squadron that deployed.

"The most amazing thing was the sacri-



Nearly 40 F/A-18C Hornets, like these from VMFA-323, have deployed to participate in operations in the Arabian Gulf and Western Pacific. This is the largest deployment for MAG-11 in more than 10 years – since Operation Desert Shield. Official USMC photo

fice other squadrons in MAG-11 made to ensure MALS-11 had all the parts they needed for this deployment," he said. "All of the Hornets had to be prepared to last for six months straight."

Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 242 Marines also deployed the first week of March to participate in a WestPac. Bats Marines took their F/A-18D Night Attack Hornets to the Orient after completing their own MCCRE, as well as become Forward Air Controller Airborne qualified. The squadron's pilots only had 10 days to become air-refuel qualified.

The main body of Marines traveled by an L-1011 aircraft, while the rest of the squadron used a C-5 and two KC-130s to get to their destination. Leppelmeier said the

Marines will support the Korean Operations Plan, and that during their six-month deployment they will also visit Guam and the Philippines.

The final deploying MAG-11 squadron was Marine All-Weather Fighter Attack Squadron 225. These Marines also deployed to Southwest Asia to support Operation Southern Watch. After participating in several preparation exercises, Viking Marines traveled to Hurlburt Field, Fla., for Joint Combat Search and Rescue training. Another obstacle they had to face was getting their 18 pilots tanker qualified.

To transport all of their equipment, Viking Marines loaded two C-17s, two C-5s and two KC-130s for the deployment. They also had to transport all the MALS-11 sup-

port vans.

However, these were not the only challenges faced by group Marines. They also had to ensure that their general Marine Corps Battle Skills Training was up to date before leaving.

"There are things we tend to forget about," said Leppelmeier. "We forget about all the time and preparation for family readiness, medical readiness, rifle, pistol and NBC training. There was also area-of-operations briefs that had to be completed before leaving."

On the heels of the 10th anniversary of participating in Desert Storm, MAG-11 Marines have proven once again that they have what it takes to rapidly deploy to every climb and place in defense of our nation.

Miramar responds to blackouts, cuts energy consumption by 8 percent

By Sgt. A.C. Strong

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Miramar Marines have cut energy consumption by 8 percent since the kickoff of the air station's Energy Conservation Campaign, March 1.

Energy conservation specialists and individual units have assessed 68 buildings so far, according to Capt. John H. Covington Jr., energy program officer and assistant public works officer.

"We're expecting the percentage to double, with the next set of numbers," said Covington of the constantly monitored program.

Heavy into Tier One of the air station's four-tiered plan,



Miramar's energy meters have been running 8 percent slower this month. Photo by Staff Sgt. Micheal Mink

individuals are expected to police themselves in order to cut down personal energy usage, but that isn't enough.

Tier Two is already in the works, according to Covington. Tiers Two and Three include the use of digital controls, sensors and other technology and system controls geared toward lowering consumption.

"Public works began delivering motion sensors March 1, based upon our recommendations," said Covington. "Those will go a long way toward energy conservation."

In spite of the positive numbers, Miramar experienced its first blackout March 19. As summer temperatures begin to rise, public works expects this to occur again if Miramar personnel do not continue to work toward

the common goal.

"These blackouts disrupt mission accomplishment and ultimately our overall purpose as Marines," said Covington.

"Successful implementation of Tiers One through Three will prevent us from ever reaching the draconian measures set up in Tier Four," said Mike Plakosh, energy program manager during an interview in February. "Those measures include anything from removal of air conditioning to power outages."

The goal is for Miramar to reduce energy consumption by 30 percent, in keeping with air station Executive Order 12902 and Defense Department instruction.

Public works will continue to monitor progress on a bi-weekly schedule, according to Covington.

"Marines have done an outstanding job, which is just what we expected," said Covington. "However, the job won't be finished until we have reached our goal."

CMC orders new policy regarding civilian participation in Marine Corps exercises

By Cpl. Rob Henderson

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

When the *Ehime Maru*, a Japanese fishing vessel, was sunk by an American submarine in early March, a large portion of our professional credibility as American servicemembers was lost in the ensuing media whirlpool.

In response to the tragedy, Gen. James L. Jones, Commandant of the Marine Corps, issued new guidance in All Marine message 10/01 dated March 14, regarding civilian participation in Marine Corps exercises.

"When planning and executing evolutions with civilian visitors, commanders will apply the principles of operational risk management and establish control measures that

ensure civilian activities are conducted safely," wrote Gen. Jones.

Allowing civilians aboard Marine Corps bases and at our activities is a vital part of our public affairs mission to keep civilians informed about Marines. These activities serve as a valuable recruiting tool with educators and young men and women approaching the eligible enlistment age, said Gen. Jones.

As with all things, a thin line of common sense separates what is appropriate for civilians to participate in and what is not.

In addition to actual operation of military vessels, aircraft, vehicles, and crew-served weapons systems, civilian visitor participation in the following activities is prohibited: throwing live hand grenades, using

diversionary devices (i.e. flash bangs and pyrotechnics), participating in live-fire during close quarter battle simulations, participating in live-fire on maneuver ranges while units are maneuvering, parachuting, and fast rope, repelling, or SPIE-rigging from helicopters.

On top of these concrete prohibitions, civilians will be barred from participating in any other activities, as determined by the commander of a unit, which could cause an increased safety risk.

The sinking of the *Ehime Maru* lowered the American public's image of servicemembers. By using "common sense" guidelines, Marines can ensure the safety of all civilians aboard government property while accomplishing the mission at hand.

3d MAW general offers life's experiences to scouts

By Staff Sgt. Micheal Mink

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Miramar Boy Scout Troop 244 has been on station for more than 40 years and was given a rare opportunity Tuesday evening in the Commander Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area headquarters auditorium.

Major General Charles F. Bolden Jr., commanding general, 3d Marine Aircraft Wing, offered to give an astronaut and space shuttle pilot presentation upon a request from fellow Marine, Lt. Col. Jim T. Sanny Sr., deputy G-3, 3d MAW.

"I thought this was incredible for the general to take time out of his busy schedule to brief a smaller audience like the Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, parents and friends," said Sanny, who was asked to teach the Aviation Merit Badge to the troop because of his aviation background.

Teaching merit badges is always on-going within the troop. Volunteers teach vari-

ous merit badges to the troop that may deal with their job profession, Sanny added.

One of the Aviation Merit Badge requirements is to speak with an outside individual who has an aviation background.

"This is a once in a lifetime opportunity," said Sanny, referring to the general's presen-

tation.

"I think it's vital for Marines and Sailors of all ranks to get out and interact with youth in our communities for a variety of reasons," said Maj. Gen. Bolden, who flew in four

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Maj. Gen. Charles F. Bolden Jr., commanding general, 3d MAW, speaks with Miramar's Boy Scout troop about his experiences as an astronaut. Photo by Staff Sgt. Micheal Mink

Miramar's first Marine commander since WWII retires today

By Cpl. Rob Henderson

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

In 1997, Marine Corps Air Station Tustin fell victim to the Base Realignment and Closure Program. Tustin's commanding officer became the first Marine commanding officer here since World War II when Miramar became a Marine Corps Air Station.

Col. Thomas A. Caughlan, officer-in-charge, community plans and liason, will retire today in a ceremony at 3 p.m. in front of station operations here.

Caughlan, a native of Fallbrook, was commissioned from the Regular Naval Reserve Officers' Training Corps Program at the University of New Mexico in 1971.

Upon completing The Basic School and Field Artillery School, Caughlan was assigned to First Marine Division, Camp Pendleton, where he served in various artillery officer assignments.

In 1976, Caughlan was assigned to flight school, and he earned his wings in Pensacola, Fla., in September of 1977. After completing his training on the CH-46 helicopter,

Caughlan was assigned to Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 163. During this tour, he completed two deployments to the Western Pacific.

After a tour as the Enlisted Recruiting Operations Officer in New Orleans, Caughlan attended the Marine Corps Command and Staff College graduating with the class of 1985.



Col. Thomas A. Caughlan

After 1985, Caughlan has served as the maintenance officer and executive officer of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 268 and as the commanding officer of Marine Medium Helicopter 163.

Caughlan was selected for the first class of the Marine Corps War College, and he graduated in 1991. Afterwards, he became a faculty member at the college until he was assigned as the Director of Special Operations and Amphibious Warfare with the North American Trade Organization.

In 1995, Caughlan assumed command of MCAS Tustin, and served as the last commanding officer of that air station. On October 1, 1997, he assumed command of MCAS Miramar, becoming the first Marine

commander since World War II.

On October 9, 1998, the Commander of Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area relocated here from MCAS El Toro. Caughlan became the chief of staff for the COMCABWEST.

In his last assignment, Caughlan served as the OIC of Community Plans and Liason for COMCABWEST.

Caughlan's personal decorations include the Defense Superior Service Medal, the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Navy and Marine Corps Commendation.

Col. Caughlan is married to the former Suzie Eastman of Pensacola. They have two daughters Kathleen, 20, and Amanda, 17. They plan to remain in the San Diego area after he retires.

"The one thing that sets the Marine Corps apart from the other services is that we know one basic truth: it is the individual Marine, not a ship, plane, or tank that is the ultimate smart weapon. Keep that thought squarely in mind. Help your people grow in knowledge and responsibility, and honor their achievements, even the small ones. Be there for them. Nothing shows a leader's commitment like being there," Caughlan said while summing up his final remarks before retiring.

Flight Jacket



Maj. Gen. Charles F. Bolden Jr.

Commanding General
3d Marine Aircraft Wing

Maj. Gen. William G. Bowdon

Commander
Marine Corps Air Bases Western Area

Maj. T.V. Johnson
Director, Public Affairs Office

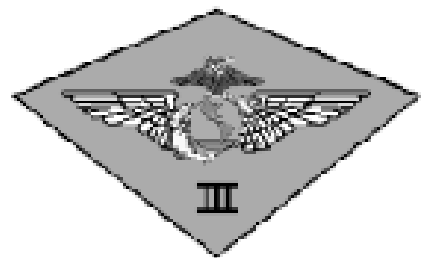
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Mir Remarks

What do you do to conserve energy?



“One thing I do is hang our blankets and towels out to dry rather than use the dryer.”

CWO-3 Jayson A. Brayall
MALS-16
assistant avionics officer



“While Marines are leaving to go to work, I tour the barracks to make sure that all Marines turn off their lights, stereos and heaters.”

Sgt. Ben W. Greene
HMM-161
barracks manager



“When I leave my room, I make sure I turn off everything.”

Lance Cpl. April L. Singleton
MAG-16
supply clerk

Regulations need to be followed at all times – especially when on two wheels

By Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.

Commentary

I see it happen all the time – Marines on motorcycles breaking Marine Corps regulations the moment that they ride off the air station.

As soon as they're out of sight of the gates many pull over to the side of the road and furiously rip off their safety vests or take off their gloves. They stick them in their jacket pocket or backpack and then ride off.

Now, being a Honda rider, I just have to slow to look at every single Harley Davidson that comes in the near vicinity of me. Why? Mostly, because I want one. I'd love to own a Harley. There is a history and a type of nostalgia similar to that of the Marine Corps. In my opinion, the devotion to the company by the riders almost rivals Marines' devotion to the Corps.

As a matter of fact, I saw a Marine Friday who was on a very sweet Harley, parked on the side of the road just past the main gate. He had just taken his safety vest off and was getting ready to put it in his black leather jacket pocket when I rolled past.

As I approached this Devil Dog, he was sitting on his Hog, head bent down and I could see his arms moving furiously. I slowed, curious what the problem was. As I passed by I saw the last bit of reflective surface flash out of the sunlight and get shoved into the dark recesses of his leather pocket. He wasn't parked on the side of the road because of a mechanical or physical problem. His problem was vanity.

I've talked to other riders and almost all of them have said the same thing – the moment they get out of sight of the military police they pull over, take off their vests and sometimes gloves, and ride off. When I ask why they give many excuses – everything from it restricts their movement to it feels unnatural. However, most say that it looks stupid.

“Do you have any idea how dumb I feel riding with this on the freeway,” asked one rider. “I hate seeing everyone else get to ride without wearing one. Why should I?”

I understand completely. It's true, even I feel a bit like a dork when put my orange reflective vest on over my black leather jacket. It just doesn't match my riding boots or my wallet-and-chain combo I sport with my leather pants. I love walking to my motorcycle. I feel like a cross between the Road Warrior and the Terminator. No one can touch me – how can they? I feel invincible. Then I straddle my cycle and turn it on, giving the engine a good rev – almost like Billy Idol's rebel yell. Then the safety vest gets put on. Talk about your ego busters! The Terminator just had training wheels put on.

So why do it? I could easily ride through traffic heading to the air station in the morning and then pull over, put on my vest and ride on just like so many others. I can't. I'm not allowed to. It's as simple as that. Air Station Order 5510.2F requires that while riding a motorcycle aboard the air station the re-

quired safety equipment must be worn at all times. That equipment includes, among other things, a safety vest and gloves. That's fine. The military police won't let you through the gates if you're not wearing that gear. They'll certainly pull you over if you get caught not wearing it on the air station's roads. But that's not the kicker.

Marine Corps Order 5100.19D requires all Marines to wear the same equipment out in town. What does that mean? It means that if the Road Warrior were a Marine, he would be required to wear that safety vest he hates so much when he rides out in town. It's not only for the safety of the rider, but for other motorists out there. It's hard for them to see us and they need all the help they can get.

Not every rider is as obvious as Arnold Schwarzenegger was in Terminator 2. It was



Motorcyclists on or off the station must always wear a reflective vest as well as a helmet, gloves, long sleeves and shoes that cover the ankles. Photo by Sgt. Carolyn S. Sittig

easy to spot him – a behemoth of a man riding on an equally large Harley Davidson Fat Boy. Even I concede that it's hard to miss him. You can even hear him a mile away because of the popcorn rumble of his V-twin engine. He took up the space of a car on his cycle. Can you say that about you on your motorcycle? Well, even if you can, it doesn't matter – someone much more insightful than you or I has made this order and it must not only be followed, but also enforced.

Would you walk into the exchange not wearing the blouse to your utility uniform or walk through the parking lot without wearing a cover? Of course not. The nearest active duty or retired military person would be on you in a heartbeat, demanding who your staff noncommissioned officer-in-charge was. So why don't we correct those who don't wear their safety vests? Is it just a harmless infraction – like not wearing a cover inside a motor vehicle? It doesn't hurt anyone, after all.

That's not the point. The point is there is a Marine Corps Order saying a rider must wear this gear. The excuse of “I didn't know” doesn't apply any more because here it is in black and white. This rule isn't in place to give people a hard time or to make anyone uncomfortable. It's for safety. It helps the people around you notice that you're there. Besides, who are you trying to impress – the Hell's Angels? I don't think so. We're Marines and we follow orders. That's what we do.

Ad Space

R-E-S-P-E-C-T, find out what it means to me

By Michelle Osborn

LINKS, MCAS Miramar

Saluting is one way that Marines show respect to one another. But do you know the history of the salute?

According to the Marine Corps Institute, Washington, D.C., the tradition of saluting originated when a messenger arrived on horseback at a military encampment. The messenger would hold his horse in the left hand and bring his right hand up to his head to show he did not have a weapon. It has continued as a tradition over the years, and represents good order and discipline while preserving the integrity of the chain of command.

As a Marine spouse, you may be thinking, "so what does that mean to me?"

It means that just as Marines show respect for one another, you can honor

your Marine by educating yourself about the Corps' history and traditions. Your Marine has worked hard to earn the title "Marine," and you can share some of his or her pride in the Marine Corps by learning about it.

Respecting the customs of the Marine Corps is also a way to show your Marine that you appreciate and support his or her service to our fine nation.

To learn about the Marine Corps lifestyle, its customs and the many resources that are available to you as a Marine spouse, enroll today in the next LINKS session.

So, what is LINKS?

LINKS stands for Lifestyle Insights, Networking, Knowledge and Skills. LINKS is a unique educational program that offers Marine spouses an

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Sergeant Major's Column

By Sgt. Maj. Ira J. Lott

MCABWA

Last Wednesday I had the pleasure and honor, along with seven other servicemembers, to testify in front of a Senate Armed Services Subcommittee on Readiness and Management.

The panel consisted of: two colonels, one Army the other Marine, a Navy captain, an Air Force lieutenant colonel, an Army sergeant major, a Navy master chief, an Air Force chief master sergeant and myself.

Each of us testified about our individual base/station as to the infrastructure, barracks, facilities and family housing. We had to make a short statement about our facilities and I would like to share with you the message I carried based, in part, on the many e-mails I've received from you about housing in the San Diego area. I would like to personally thank each of you for taking the time to email me.

Here is my statement to the subcommittee. "Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

I appreciate the opportunity to appear before you today. I am particularly pleased

that you have chosen to focus on the condition of the infrastructure, facilities and family housing at Miramar. I would like to concentrate my discussion this morning on military family housing.

As a result of Base Realignment And Closure legislation, we closed two of our Marine Corps Air Stations in Orange County and moved to a single site in San Diego. The location of MCAS Miramar is ideal because of its proximity to other key military facilities and training areas in the region.

BRAC funded most of our barracks requirements and we have come a long way in our facilities renovation. The critical shortfall we are experiencing in San Diego is in military family housing. The move to San Diego required us to vacate approximately 2,800 military units that housed 60 percent of our married Marines. With only 527 military family housing units located aboard MCAS Miramar, we entered into a regional housing alliance with the Navy to best support our military families. Our partnership with Navy housing is highly valued, but we must do more to obtain affordable family

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Beware of large tax refunds

If it looks too good to be true it probably is

By Capt. Jerry A. Stevenson

Legal Assistance Office, MCAS Miramar

As in most towns and cities with a large military population, there are certain businesses that seek to profit at the expense of military members. An area rampant with the potential for abuse is tax return preparation. While there are many honest tax return preparation firms in Southern California, the allure of greater profits makes it all too tempting for some businesses to inflate tax refunds by preparing fraudulent returns using a variety of techniques.

One of the techniques used by unscrupulous tax return preparers is the numbers game. The preparer will prepare the return using numbers that historically will not raise many audit flags by the IRS. These numbers are usually fabricated and cannot be supported by the taxpayer or the preparer.

An example of this technique when the preparer tells the Marine that he can deduct a little less than 10 percent of his gross income as a charitable expense regardless of how much he gave. So the preparer would report between \$1,300 and \$1,700 as a charitable deduction for a corporal with \$18,000 in wages, even though the corporal only donated \$25 in charitable contributions. This is one of the major fraudulent deductions made by these preparers. To make sure you were not a victim to this technique look at line 15 of your form Schedule A and determine if that is the amount you gave, in cash, to charity last year. If the amount is just under 10 percent of your gross income and you did not give that amount of money or you do not have the receipts to prove to the IRS, that you donated that amount then you have fallen prey to this scam.

Another scheme used is to inflate a Marine's business expenses. Military members, like any other profession, incur expenses in the course of our duties that are not reimbursed. A dishonest tax preparer will get you a larger return by taking improper "business" deductions.

For instance, the preparer may deduct haircuts for military personnel. Unfortunately, haircuts have not been a deductible expense for military members for more than 30 years. Other deductions commonly taken by these tax preparers are the costs of commuting to work, which is a personal expense. Sometimes the preparer will make unsupported "BUSINESS EXPENSE" deductions of \$7,000 to \$11,000 most of which cannot be supported by the taxpayer. If your return shows "business deductions", without any supporting evidence, you should have those deductions reviewed to determine if they are allowable.

Most reputable firms will itemize your business deductions to the IRS; even if your business deductions are itemized you should get them reviewed to determine whether or not those expenses are actually deductible. While any employee business expense greater than \$75 does not have to be receipted, you must still show other evidence to support those expenses. For instance, if you show that you bought a new set of utilities you must show a receipt or the new utilities. The cost of Service Uniforms and Blues is not deductible. If your preparer deducted the cost of uniforms or uniform maintenance, he or she must also have prepared and filed Form 2106. In addition, you must reduce any

deduction taken for uniforms, by the amount of your yearly uniform allowance.

Home office expenses and personal computers and equipment are other areas ripe for fraud. By law you can only deduct expenses relating to your home computer if it is necessary to use it for your employment. If your PC is a required condition of your employment you may be able to deduct the whole cost in the year purchased. Marines, for the most part, cannot deduct the expenses of a home office, home office furniture, or a desktop computer used in their home for occasional Marine Corps business.

Recently Marines and Sailors in Southern California have reported falling victim to one or more of these techniques. The tax return preparation companies have generated returns that are three to four times the amount the Marine should have legally received. One of the most troubling factors here at MCAS Miramar, is that Staff NCO's and NCO's are referring their young Marines, at record rates, to these tax preparers and endorsing their practices. There have been reports of whole sections going to these establishments as a group or using Marine Corps fax machines to process their tax returns.

It is a violation of the Internal Revenue Code to file a return without making a reasonable attempt to find out the correctness of a deduction that is "too good to be true". Filing a false return is a violation of the Tax Code and the Uniform Code of Military Justice. While the Internal Revenue Service will generally not prosecute a taxpayer for a fraudulent return prepared by a paid preparer, that is only if the Marine comes forward and corrects the return within a reasonable time of discovering the error.

It may be difficult to distinguish the legitimate return preparers from the illegitimate. Most companies, whether or not they use these practices, comply with the tax education laws, have business licenses and may even be insured. The best way to ferret out improper businesses is to look at the fees charged. Many times the preparers charge a disproportionate amount for their services. For instance, in Southern California, a single Marine, who does not own a home, can expect to pay anywhere from \$50 to \$150 to have his return prepared by a reputable tax preparation firm.

The same Marine, using a firm that prepares returns using improper techniques, will pay between \$300 and \$400. The Marine generally thinks that this is ok, since they got them back three times the amount they would have received if the return were done properly.

I would encourage everyone who has had their returns prepared by a civilian tax preparation firm to have their returns reviewed by the Miramar Tax Center. If you feel you are a victim of an illegitimate tax scheme, let the Miramar Tax Center review your return to ensure it was prepared and filed properly. If audited, the Miramar Legal Assistance Office can assist you in negotiating a settlement with the IRS. If there are several Marines in the same situation, the collective strength will make for a better compromise. Unfortunately, the longer you wait the harder it will be to reduce or forgive any penalties that accrue for an underpayment of tax. Penalties can be up to 70 percent of the under-

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Ad Space

New software testing may speed up Internet connection

By Sgt. Carolyn S. Sittig

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

Recently Miramar's Computer Network and Systems Division began testing new server software that will enable a faster Internet connection for the station's computer users.

The new software, Superscout by Surf Control is a database program that allows CNSD Marines to monitor all information regarding Internet use including what sites each specific computer is being used to access and the time and date those sites are being accessed. Miramar's existing program already does this; however, two new things this program does is cut down work time and help unclog the bandwidth.

"Bandwidth controls the speed of the Internet lines which can get clogged up and run slower if people are using extraneous sites," said Cpl. Nathan Dellamonica, CNSD administrator and Redding, native.

The program can also group each Web

site into categories. With information clearly organized, personnel can do reports and determine how many people are visiting which sites and the largest category of Web sites being accessed.

Another function of the categories is the ability to block all sites in a category like pornography rather than the archaic way the previous system worked which required a Marine to type in each site needing to be blocked. This cuts the amount of time spent doing this type of blocking.

"This (program) definitely makes our job easier and allows us to manage Internet usage better. It also allows us to direct Marine Corp Internet access for what it was intended for," said Dellamonica.

With the benefits reviewed by the station's CNSD, the 3d Marine Aircraft Wing's G-6 will be testing this same program next week. Depending on the outcome of testing, Miramar will determine whether to purchase the program and permanently implement it.

Riggers belt regulations change again

By Cpl. W.A. Napper Jr.

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

The Commandant of the Marine Corps signed a Marine Administrative Message today, advancing the progress of the Corps' new martial arts system one step further.

According to MARADMIN 143/01, as of May 1, the green riggers belt is no longer available for optional wear with the utility uniform. The belt is now part of the martial arts system and is the third level of qualification for Marines. The message encourages Marines to keep their belts for when they qualify in the system.

The system, which replaces combat line training, is built on a five-tier system of qualification. Once Marines complete the

initial level and qualify, they will be authorized to wear a tan-colored riggers belt. Following that are gray and green belts. According to Capt. Daniel Dukes, Education Command secretary-recorder, if Marines wish to advance in their martial arts training, they must first qualify as an instructor.

Upon instructor qualification they will then rate to wear a brown strip on their green belt. Following their green belts Marines can earn their final two – brown and black.

Dukes said one of the main reasons MARADMIN 143/01 was delayed was because of difficulties with having the dyes settle in the belts, which slowed production.

The recruit depots have been qualifying their recruits in the new martial arts system since January.

Finance Office's new program aims to cut government credit card debt

By Cpl. Mike Camacho

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

The finance office here has installed a new solution to a big Marine Corps problem March 13.

The answer to the problem involves an option for Marines to pay their government travel card bills with their travel claim reimbursement by way of a split disbursement option.

This option will allow servicemembers to pay the bill with their travel claim return through an electronic funds transfer. Before, the responsibility of the payment was left solely to the cardholder.

Now, the finance office is enabling cardholders to take care of the bill at the finance office before problems arise from late payments.

"This is going to help servicemembers because, now they don't have to worry about that payment when it's automatically taken care of right here at the finance office," said 1st Lt. Frank Aguilar, officer-in-charge of the

finance office's travel section. "While this new option will help Marines make their payment it will also help the Marine Corps cut down on the problems from delinquencies."

This past February Marines owed \$2.9 million in late payments to the Bank of America. This proves that there is a problem with Marines not paying their government credit cards. To help alleviate that problem, the finance office here has installed this system.

Also, it is vital for card-carrying servicemembers going on temporary additional duty assignment, that is more than 30 days long, to provide a supplemental travel claim form every 30 days to the finance office. If the finance office doesn't get the supplemental claim then they can't pay the bill and, it could adversely affect the cardholder's personal credit. According to Aguilar, servicemembers should allow five business days for the supplemental claim to be processed after the finance office receives it.

For more information call 577-6980.

Scouts, continued from page 2
space shuttle missions from 1986 to 1994. "We have the benefit of having first-hand experience in the pitfalls and obstacles to which most of them will be exposed in the coming years of their development. We can provide the 'lessons learned' method of instruction and mentoring to them in hopes of keeping them from making the same mistakes as we."

The general considers his most memorable flight to be his 1994 flight of a six-member crew on the Space Shuttle Discovery, because the landmark eight-day mission was the first joint U.S./Russian space mission, involving the participation of a Russian cosmonaut as a mission specialist. The crew conducted a series of joint U.S./Russian science activities and carried the Space Habitation Module-2 and the Wake Shield Facility-01 into space. Upon completion of this mission, Maj. Gen. Bolden left the space

program having logged more than 680 hours in space.

"Being a scouting mentor gives me tremendous satisfaction. I am not only helping my sons by experiencing scouting with them, but helping other young boys as well, so they too can achieve and have a sense of accomplishment," said Sanny, who has two sons in scouting and has been involved in scouting for more than 15 years.

"I am always hopeful that the kids, and even the adults, will leave my presentations motivated to study more diligently to prepare themselves for the challenges in the coming years and that they will come to believe in themselves and their capability to take control of their own destiny. I always try to emphasize at the conclusion of my presentations that I want them to grow to be risk takers who don't fear failure, but view it as the occasional price of striving for lofty and noble goals," Maj. Gen. Bolden said in closing.



Hollywood Marines

Art imitates life once again, as "Marines" from NBC's "Semper Fi" gather in the "pit." Actors Scott Bairstow, Bianca Kajlich, Vicellous Reon Shannon, Steve Burton, Michael Pena, Alex Burns and Tammy Townsend work to find out if they have what it takes to be United States Marines during the two-part mini-series airing Sunday on NBC. *Semper Fi* is a Dreamworks project, in association with NBC Studios and airs at 9 p.m. Photo courtesy of Chris Haston of NBC

Ad Space

Don't forget to set your clocks ahead and roll your sleeves up this weekend

Northern Edge 2001

Warm-weather Marines learn cold-weather tactics



Marines from the Light Armored Vehicle Air-Defense Platoon, Camp Pendleton, test an LAV on icy terrain during their deployment for cold-weather testing during Northern Edge 2001. *Photo by Senior Airman Jessica Bruno*

By Sgt. Troy M. Ruby

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

ELIENSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska – A puff of smoke erupts from the exhaust pipe as the diesel engine of the \$4.5 million Marine Corps Light Armored Vehicle comes to life. A rumble is heard and felt as the heavily armored machine drives off to provide low-air defense for soldiers during Alaska’s largest joint exercise, Northern Edge 2001.

The 83 Marines from the LAV/Air-Defense platoon out of Camp Pendleton,

began arriving in Alaska in late February to prepare for its 28-day deployment here.

The first task before them was to attend cold-weather training at the Army’s Black Rapids Training Site here.

“We received a four-day indoctrination into survival techniques, treatments, signs and symptoms of cold-weather injuries, basic cold-weather hygiene, and learned about the necessary clothes that a person should wear,” said Capt. Wayne R. Zuber, LAV-AD commanding officer. “In cold weather you have to be sure you are taking care of your Marines. I’m very happy that we haven’t had a single cold-weather

injury. I’ll attribute that to the vehicle commanders and the sergeants who are making sure the Marines are staying warm and drinking plenty of water.”

After completion of the cold-weather training, the Marines took to the road in their 15-ton LAVs, to learn about cold-weather driving tactics. The conditions were a big shock for many of the Southern California Marines, as some had never seen, let alone driven on snow or ice before, said Zuber.

After some roadway driving, they put chains on four of the vehicle’s eight tires and began driving off-road in much harsher conditions. During the training, they purposefully got the vehicles stuck several times to practice recovery techniques.

In addition to supporting Northern Edge, the Marines also evaluated several pieces of equipment while in the extreme temperatures of Alaska including a new heating unit for the LAVs and new bayonets.

“The manufacturer found out we were the only Marines training in a cold-weather environment anywhere in world right now, so they asked us to do some cold-weather evaluation for them,” said Zuber. “We simply got the parameters they wanted the bayonets tested by and put them through the paces required.”

For this particular deployment, the platoon brought six LAVs with them; four to be used for air defense, one as a maintenance vehicle and one as a command and control post where the section

leader keeps the air defense crews informed of incoming aircraft.

“It’s a pretty simple set-up. In the command post vehicle, there’s a map on one side and several radios in front of the section leader. He’s monitoring all the radio traffic and can give the crews in the air defense vehicles some idea as to where the aircraft might be and what their heading is,” said Zuber.

Each air-defense LAV is equipped with two Stinger missile pods, each holding four missiles and eight additional missiles for re-loading. It also has a 25mm Gattling Gun that can fire up to 1,800 rounds per minute, available for low altitude air defense.

Since their arrival, the Marines have been in the field almost every day, conducting either their own platoon training or providing low-air defense for Northern Edge missions.

When supporting Northern Edge, they cover two flight windows each day; one in the afternoon and one in the evening. They have been involved in an average of 18 engagements per mission.

“It has been a great opportunity for everyone,” said Zuber. “The pilots are using us for training aids because, how often do they get to train against a ground-based air-defense system? We are using them as a training aid too; because it’s not very often that we have planes actually aggressing us. Everybody is getting something out of it. We would certainly love to come back next year,” Zuber added.

Ad Space

Northern Edge 2001 story told by sub-JIB

By Capt. Rebecca L. Goodrich-Hinton

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska – From hanging out of the back of a C-130, flying in an F-16, participating in a combat search and rescue mission, to deploying with Marine Light Armored Vehicles, members of the Northern Edge 2001 Joint Information Bureau (north) have more opportunities to experience all aspects of the two-week annual exercise than any of the other 10,000 participants. It's part of the job to publicize units, their members and their missions.

"I love working in this field – we get to do everything," said Air Force Staff Sgt. Vincent A. Parker, still photographic craftsman from Kadena Air Base, Okinawa, Japan. "We just piggy-back onto what a unit is already doing, that ensures we get the most realistic coverage."

A JIB is a consolidation of photographers, videographers and journalists from combat camera, visual information and public affairs shops from all four Department of Defense services and the Coast Guard. The JIB's main function during Northern Edge 2001 is to highlight the accomplishments and capabilities of the Marines, airmen, soldiers, and sailors operating in harsh climate conditions. Having photographers, videographers and journalists working out of the same office ensures thorough, accurate and efficient coverage of each of the units.

"We've been sending out joint teams daily to capture the people in action," said Air Force Maj. Valerie W. Trefts, Eielson JIB officer in charge from Eielson AFB. "Each team works together gathering imagery and information on a particular unit and then comes back to the office to develop a complementary package of photos, a video and an article that encapsulates each operation."

It's great working with people from the other services, said Sgt. Troy M. Ruby, combat correspondent from the Public Affairs Office here. "I'm learning a lot about their terminology and specific missions. That's certainly helped my writing in support of this joint operation."

"Honestly, the best part of our job is when units get excited about seeing the coverage we provide. You don't often see the units after the fact, but when they come by our office or call just to say "thank you" it really makes us feel that our efforts are worthwhile. We're out there for them and it's great when they notice," said Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Spike Call, photo-journalist from Naval Air Station North Island.

Keeping the information flowing out of the Eielson JIB is Air Force Senior Airman Carrie L. Atwood, graphics journeyman from Elmendorf AFB, Alaska. "I work with all the team members to ensure their products compliment one another and are submitted for external release and for posting on the Northern Edge 2001 Web site."

The Elmendorf JIB releases the final products to the local, national and international media and forwards products to the participating units' public affairs offices back home, according to Atwood. There will also be photo and video montages done for each of the units covered.

"There are a lot of great operations being conducted from Eielson during Northern Edge and we're trying to cover as many units as possible," said Trefts.

Some of the units that the Eielson JIB staff have covered include the 22nd Special Tactics Squadron, McCord Air Force Base, Wash.; 62nd Air Defense

Artillery from the 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Army Barracks, Hawaii; 4th Light Armored Battalion Recon; 353rd Combat Training Squadron from Eielson Air Force Base; 168th Air Refueling Wing, Alaska Air National Guard, Eielson AFB; 152nd Airlift Wing, Nevada Air National Guard; and the Army's 172nd Separate Infantry Brigade, Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

The Eielson JIB is only one of the three JIBs in support of Northern Edge 2001. JIB coverage of all four military branches can be found on the Northern Edge 2001 Web site at www.elmendorf.af.mil/orgs/alcom/ne/.



Sgt. Troy M. Ruby, combat correspondent, MCAS Miramar, types a story for immediate release at the Northern Edge 2001 JIB. Official DoD photo

Miramar officer serves as JIB chief for Northern Edge 2001

By Sgt. Troy M. Ruby

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

EIELSON AIR FORCE BASE, Alaska – Operation Northern Edge 2001, an annual joint exercise involving about 10,000 Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine and Navy personnel, began March 19 in several regions of Alaska.

In support of the exercise, Capt. Rebecca L. Goodrich-Hinton, deputy director of the Public Affairs Office here, is on location in Eielson, Alaska, serving as the assistant subordinate Joint Information Bureau chief.

A sub-JIB is a field military public affairs office made up of representatives from all the services that are involved in the exercise. The sub-JIB has many

different functions, such as extensive written coverage of exercise events and updating the exercise Web site located at www.elmendorf.af.mil/orgs/alcom/ne/.

They are also doing both video and photo documentation of the event and media relations.

"The local media is very interested in covering the actions of the military, so we find out what operations they are interested in and coordinate with the unit that can best give them the information they are in need of to help tell the units story," said Goodrich-Hinton.

The duties of the assistant sub-JIB chief are many and always changing, said Goodrich-Hinton. Her immediate duties include the coordination and assignments for the 14 military members assigned to the sub-JIB here.

"We have people here with many different skills and jobs, such as photography, videography and writers. Over the course of Northern Edge there will be several events, all requiring coverage and I assist with the arrangements and coordination to get them linked up with the operators to ensure proper coverage of the operation," said Goodrich-Hinton.

In addition, when the need arises, she will cover the event herself.

"I'm going to write a story on an intelligence gathering aircraft this afternoon. We don't have enough writers to cover all the events going on, so I'm going to cover it myself," said Goodrich-Hinton. "I'm excited about the opportunity to

write. I enjoy going on location and getting involved in the story instead of just reading about it."

Goodrich-Hinton arrived in Alaska March 15 and was transported to Elmendorf Air Force Base in Anchorage on Friday where she was greeted by snow and three degree temperatures.

"The extreme temperatures are cause for a lot of concern for everyone in the sub-JIB. Saturday morning it was -12 degrees. I make sure that everyone is taking the proper precautions for safety's sake," said Goodrich-Hinton.

Goodrich-Hinton will be in Alaska for the entire exercise that is scheduled to end Saturday.



Capt. Rebecca L. Goodrich-Hinton, deputy director of public affairs, MCAS Miramar, interviews Air Force Maj. Les Gonzales, intelligence commander, 152nd Air Wing, Nevada Air National Guard, aboard a C-130 participating in the Scathe View Mission during a Northern Edge 2001. Photo by Senior Airman Craig Clapper

Ad Space

New refueling vehicle tested here

By Cpl. C.A. Eriksen

CPAO, MCAS Miramar

For the next six weeks the new Aviation Refueling Capability vehicle will be tested by the Marine Corps starting with basic airfield fueling operations here. The current model is only being put through Phase 1 testing to be evaluated for use at existing airfields and is not intended, at this time, to be used to support forward airfields.

Miramar is the first of three Marine facilities where tests and training on the ARC are to be conducted. Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., is the second stop and Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms is the third stop before returning back to Miramar for a final evaluation.

Some of the tests that the ARC will be going through are flight line over wing and under wing fueling and defueling, embarkation loading tests, major maintenance repair completion of five hours or less, and rough-road (improved dirt/gravel roads) operations. This is not an off-road, rough terrain vehicle according to Gunnery Sgt. David E. Groch.

Phase 2 will find the Marine Corps testing the tactical off-road variant of the ARC for support of forward expeditionary airfields in anticipation of eventually phasing out the M970 Tanker Trailer.

Following successful testing, the first production models of the non-tactical ARC



The new Aviation Refueling Capability vehicle (right) is being tested here to replace the M931 Tractor and the M970 Refueler (left) as the refueling vehicle for the Marine Corps. Photo by Cpl. C.A. Eriksen

are to be introduced to the Fleet Marine Force June 2002. From the start of the ARC program to FMF introduction is projected to have taken about three years, according to Barry P. Roisman, senior functional analyst combat support and logistics equipment team, Marine Corps Systems Command, Quantico, Va. Normally the length of an acquisitions program is much longer and more involved.

Using the Commercial Off-the-Shelf program, the ARC acquisitions program has been brought to this stage very quickly by the Marine Corps. COTS allows Department of Defense agencies to search from already available commercial

products and provide manufacturers with specifications specific to their needs.

Currently the Marine Corps employs the M931 Tractor and the M970 to accomplish the mission of airfield flight line fueling and supporting forward expeditionary airfield fueling operations.

The Marine Corps is looking to augment the aging fleet of M970's with the new ARC vehicle. With a faster rate of flow, simplified controls and better maneuverability, the ARC is designed to be the future of fueling and defueling the Corps' aircraft.

Colonel John Sweeny, commanding officer of Marine Wing Support Group 37, would like to see the ARC in use within MWSG-37 because of the high maintenance associated with the M970. From a maintenance aspect, the new ARC is expected to require fewer man-hours to maintain and have a higher reliability rate due to the newer technology used and simplified design, according to Chief

Warrant Officer 2 Jim L. Hendrix, Fuels Branch officer-in-charge for Marine Wing Support Squadron 373.

The Marines of MWSG-37 were selected to test the ARC for the Marine Corps due to being able to put the vehicle under real world scenarios while supporting Weapons and Tactics Instruction 2-01 at MCAS Yuma and Combined Arms Exercises 5-01 and 6-01 at Twentynine Palms according to Sweeny. The testing and training being conducted by MWSG 37 is to allow those Marines who will eventually operate and support the ARC in the fleet the an opportunity to get first hand experience and provide input to help determine what the final ARC will be, according to Maj. Wayne R. Steele, operations officer, MWSG-37. Marines of MWSS-371, 373 and 374 will "see if it (the ARC) can take a couple of lance corporals and corporals for a few days and stand up to them, basically Marine proof it," said Hendrix.

Ad Space



Lance Cpl. Steven P. Engs, plane captain, VMFA-323, puts the ARC through a defueling test. Photo by Cpl. C.A. Eriksen

Preventing sports injuries saves DoD dollars

By Jim Garamone

American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON — Sports are a big part of the military culture, but servicemembers have to be more careful when they play.

Sports and recreation participation are major causes of injuries in the armed forces, said Diana Settles, program

manager

for injury

prevention

and

physical

fitness for

the Navy.

“DoD

spends \$600 million to \$750 million per year to treat musculoskeletal injuries,” said Settles, who also works on the DoD Injury Occupational Illness Prevention Committee. While this statistic covers all musculoskeletal disabilities, a significant number are due to sports accidents, she said.

Settles said DoD is trying to get a better handle on the scope of the problem, but that’s been hard because many sports injuries occur during off-duty hours.

The effects of these injuries are far-reaching. There is, of course, the pain service members suffer. But also, injuries affect the mission.

“During Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the Army reported its medical evacuations and hospitalizations were primarily sports and recreational activities,” Settles said. These injured soldiers were unavailable for duty when the war started. Other soldiers had to take their places or their fellow soldiers had to do the job with fewer personnel.

The Air Force reports that basketball is the cause of most sports injuries. It is followed by softball, flag football, snow skiing and cycling.

Basketball provides a good example of what service members can use to avoid injuries, Settles said. “Basketball is very popular and service members play the sport year-round,” she said. “Pick-up games are common and they are played indoors and outdoors.” Pick-up games commonly do not have referees.

Using basketball as an example, it is an aerobic sport involving a lot of running. There’s a level of fitness people should meet before playing the game, Settles said.

The sport requires a lot of lateral movement. Players should warm-up and stretch for five to 10 minutes before taking the court. She said local morale, welfare and recreation specialists can advise service members what types of stretching are best for various sports.

Ignoring external factors can also cause accidents. In the case of basketball, such factors include the condition of the court and the proper use of players’ equipment. Don’t just pick up a basketball and start playing. Check out both indoor and outdoor courts to ensure they are dry and do not contain sharp or foreign objects. They should be properly lit. Make sure there is enough room behind the hoop so players don’t run into a wall or go up on a curb. Wear the correct shoes when playing hoops.

“Many times people are playing basketball in running shoes,” Settles said. “There is little lateral ankle support in

running shoes – which predisposes the athlete to an ankle injury.”

Sprains and knee injuries are the likely injuries that result from playing basketball. Every sport has internal and external risk factors, and service members who are aware of them can cut down on injuries.

DoD is trying to reach service members through their coaches, units and specialists in the recreation centers.

“The service man or woman needs to understand the internal and external risks associated with their sports,” Settles said. “This could be relayed to them via coaching staff, the MWR [MCCS] personnel, personal training personnel or the

officials. I think the ‘train the trainer’ is important, but the individual service man or woman has to take control and understand what the risks are with their sports and work to minimize them.”



Maj. Anthony Graves-Buckingham, training officer, 4th Medical Battalion, does extra stretches before going on a run because he strained his back while running as a result of not stretching properly. Photo by Cpl. Rob Henderson

Ad Space

NCOA job fair

The Noncommissioned officers' association will hold a job fair Wednesday at the Scottish Rite Center, 1895 Camino Del Rio South.

One of 12 the Association is sponsoring it this year, the event is scheduled to take place from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The job fair is free to military personnel of all ranks who have chosen to leave active service. Separated and retired veterans and family members of servicemembers are also invited to attend.

For details call (210) 653-6161.

"Gray Ghosts" hold annual reunion

Marine Fighter Attack Squadron 531, in conjunction with the Marine Corps Aviation Association, Sept. 20-23, in San Diego will hold its annual reunion. All personnel who served with or were attached to the squadron are invited to attend.

For more information call Dave Kassebaum at home: (858) 459-6088, (858) 459-0066, or via cell phone at: (619) 252-6088. He can also be reached via email at: kass6088@aol.com.

MS Society seeks volunteers and participants

The San Diego chapter of the National Multiple Sclerosis Society will hold its annual walks Saturday and Sunday. Saturday's walk is at Carlsbad Flower Fields and Sunday's walk is at Embarcadero Marina Park North.

In addition to walkers, hundreds of volunteers are needed.

More information is available by calling Linda Ingram at (619) 467-9255 or online at: www.mswalk.com.

WIC extends helping hand

The San Diego area American Red Cross Women, Infants, and Children program makes it easier for families with children under 5 years old who find it hard to make ends meet in this high cost-of-living area.

WIC provides vouchers for nutritious food worth up to \$130 per month, as well as nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and referrals to health care.

Financial eligibility depends on total family size and income.

For more information call 800-500-6411

Padres' Military Opening Day

The San Diego Padres, team of the Marine Corps and Navy, will hold Military Opening Day April 12. The Padres will take

on the San Francisco Giants at 2:05 p.m. Ticket vouchers are available at the Entertainment Ticket Office.

Prices are \$12 for Field seating, \$11 for Plaza seating, \$8.50 for Lodge seating, \$5 for Grandstand Plaza seating and \$4.50 for Grandstand Lodge seating.

Vouchers are not a guaranteed seat and must be exchanged at the stadium for tickets. Advance voucher exchange is recommended for best seating.

Vouchers are non-refundable or exchangeable unless the game is sold out, at which time vouchers for this game are required to be returned to the ticket office prior to April 16.

Contact the ticket office at 577-4126 or 577-4141, or the Padres at (619) 29-PA-DRES, or visit www.padres.com details.

NWCA Scholarship Foundation accepting applications

The Navy Wives Clubs of America, Inc. offers \$1,500 annual scholarships grants to eligible sons and daughters of enlisted members of the Navy, Marine Corps or Coast Guard on active duty, retired with pay or deceased.

The NWCA awards 40 scholarships annually to applicants who show bases of need for financial assistance, who have good grades and hold a current military identification card.

The deadline for applications is May 30. Applicants should send a self-addressed, stamped business envelope to the following address.

Mrs. Barbara Stead
NWCA Scholarship Director
3848 Old Colony Circle
Virginia Beach, VA 23452-2910


MOSC offers scholarships

Miramar's Marine Officers' Spouses' Club offers college and technical school scholarships to high school seniors, high school graduates and family members of active-duty servicemembers of MCAS Miramar and its tenant commands. Family members of retired and deceased servicemembers residing in the Miramar area are also eligible.


The MOSC will also award one \$1,000 and three \$500 MOSC sponsored scholarships.

The MOSC deadline is April 15 and is open to all eligible family members. Applications postmarked after the deadline will not be considered.

Applications are available from local high school guidance counselors or by sending a self-addressed, stamped business en-



Free movies from MCCS



<p>Today</p> <p>Head Over Heels (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>The Wedding Planner (PG-13) 8:30 p.m.</p> <p>Saturday</p> <p>Monkeybone (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Saving Silverman (PG-13) 8:30 p.m.</p> <p>Sunday</p> <p>Save the Last Dance (PG-13) 1 p.m.</p> <p>Valentine (R) 6:30 p.m.</p>	<p>Wednesday</p> <p>3,000 Miles to Graceland (R) 6:30 p.m.</p> <p>Thursday</p> <p>Recess: School's Out (G) 2 p.m.</p> <p>Head Over Heels (PG-13) 6:30 p.m.</p>
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The station theater is equipped with a 35 mm projection system and Dolby Digital Surround Sound. All movies are free for everyone. For movie synopses see the current theater flyer or call 577-4143.

velope to:

Marine Officers' Spouses' Club
MCAS Miramar
Lynn Holtzhouser, Scholarship Chairperson
P.O. Box 45078
San Diego, CA 92145-0078

TRICARE stops co-payments

Active-duty family members enrolled in TRICARE Prime will no longer have to pay co-payments as of Sunday. This effects civilian care provided by the selected primary care manager, referred specialty care – including mental health – and hospitalization.

The change does not apply to co-payments for pharmacy or the point of service option, according to TRICARE representatives.

For more information call 800-242-6788.

EFMP holds second advisory council meeting

The second meeting for the Committee for Persons With Disabilities is at the Friendship Center Wednesday at 1:30 p.m.

This month's meeting will cover humanitarian assignment policies highlighting the reason and purpose of the RE3 Code as well as an open forum for ideas.

During the last meeting, topics ranged from assignment to government quarters, marketing and TRICARE.

For details or to reserve a seat, call Gunnery Sgt. Shawn Keating at 577-4098.

Alcohol-free weekend

The Miramar Semper Fit Health Promotion Office, Single Marine Program and the Great Escape invite Miramar Marines to accept the alcohol-free challenge – and a weekend of fun challenges, April 6-8.

Call 577-6171/6283 or 7963 for details.

SGLI to increase in April

The top rate of Servicemember's Group Life Insurance will automatically increase to \$250,000 Sunday.

The current premium payment of 80 cents per \$10,000 of coverage will continue, resulting in an additional \$4 premium being withheld from each member's pay for SGLI. As an example, for those members who currently have the maximum coverage amount of \$200,000, the premium payment per month is \$16. With the increase in coverage, the premium will now be \$20 per month for the maximum coverage. A remark appeared on the February 2001 Leave and Earnings Statement, bringing attention to this rate increase.

If a member desires the full increased coverage of \$250,000, no action is necessary.

If any member desires a reduced amount of coverage, or no coverage that member must prepare a new VA SGLV 8286, a form that indicates a reduced amount of coverage or no coverage. This form must be prepared, signed, dated and submitted in April.

Any reduced-coverage or no-coverage requests received during this period will result in a refund of any over-collection of the premium during the month of April. The April time frame is critical. Requests for reduced SGLI coverage, or no SGLI coverage dated and received after April 30 will be processed to reduce the coverage or stop the coverage, but will not result in a refund of the maximum premium withheld for the month of April.

Questions regarding SGLI should be directed to your personnel office.

Welcome aboard brief changes to Wednesdays

The Commanding General's Welcome Aboard Brief at the Joint Reception Center, Building 2258, has changed to the first and third Wednesday of each month vice Monday. The YMCA Out & About Tour has also changed to the first and third Thursday vice Tuesday. The Brief will start at 7:40 a.m. sharp until 4:30 p.m. and the Tour will start at 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. The following dates are provided for you to plan accordingly:

April 4, 18
May 2, 16
June 6, 20

For details call 577-1783 or 577-9123.

Avoid rush hour, catch a flick

Beat the traffic. Beginning in April, the station theater will offer the Rush Hour Quick Flick. The "Flick" is a free movie Fridays at 4:30 p.m.

For more information call 577-426



Lott,

continued from page 4

housing for our Marines. San Diego Navy Housing currently maintains 9,039 military family housing units and Miramar-based Marine families occupy 1,148 of these units; our fair share based on population. Roughly 18 percent of all Marine families assigned to Miramar reside in one of 52 military family housing areas located throughout San Diego County, some more than 30 miles from the base. The severe shortage of affordable rental units within reasonable commuting distance of MCAS Miramar adversely impacts quality of life and morale and is an indirect, albeit serious, threat to our readiness. With the likely loss of some of the existing units under the Domestic Lease program, our family housing situation will get worse before it gets better. Marines who are preoccupied with high housing costs and making ends meet divert their main focus from mission accomplishment. Even in peacetime, much of the work our young

Refund,
continued from page 4
estimated tax. Also, an interest rate of 8 percent per year is mandatory.

If you feel that your return is “too good to be true”, then you should come to the Miramar Tax Center to have your return corrected. If you come forward and correct your return before April 16 you will not be assessed penalties from the IRS. In addition, you may be able to recover your interest penalty and the fees paid to prepare your return. If you wait until the IRS audits you, you may not be able to take advantage of any group settlement the IRS may have to offer recently, some Marines received notices for their 1997 returns. These notices are for returns filed by a tax preparer in Oceanside, who is currently serving time. Unfortunately, those Marines now have to pay almost twice what they received as a refund due to interest and penalties that have accrued. The bottom line is do not let anyone tell you not to worry, you won’t get audited or the deductions taken are “legit”. Those words should raise some doubts in your mind. If there are substantial improper deductions taken on your return, it will be discovered. There is no time limit on fraud, meaning the IRS can

audit your return at any time. The Miramar Tax Center can review your return and ensure that the return you have filed is legally supportable. If you do not want to get your return reviewed by the tax center, I would encourage you to get the information supporting the large itemized deductions from your tax preparer. These are for your records, if you are in Hawaii or North Carolina, your Tax Return preparer may not be there to support you.

LINKS,
continued from page 4
opportunity to learn about the Marine Corps, its customs and resources from “seasoned” Marine spouses who serve as mentors. What better way to learn the truths about the Marine Corps lifestyle than from fellow spouses who have “been there, done that?”

The LINKS program is presented in a casual session setting and everything, including childcare and refreshments, are free of charge. All Marine Corps spouses are invited and encouraged to attend.

The next session is scheduled for April 17 through 19, 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. For more information call the LINKS office at 577-4810.

Lott,
continued from page 10
Marines do is inherently dangerous and involves great responsibility. Concerns about family safety and finances can impact the Marine’s ability to concentrate on his day-to-day mission.

Marine families who live on the local economy have seen their increases in housing allowances gobbled up by skyrocketing housing costs, energy costs, vehicle maintenance, and gasoline prices. Annual adjustments to housing allowances simply can’t keep up with the booming San Diego economy and housing shortages. Finding a rental unit is a real challenge in San Diego where the vacancy rate is less than 1 percent. Junior enlisted Marines with families often opt to occupy quarters located in high-crime areas because of the relative affordability of such neighborhoods. Those Marines who choose safer areas find that their housing allowance is dwarfed by expensive rent. Typical rent in San Diego exceeds the junior Marines’ housing allowance by anywhere from 10 to 150 percent.

The Navy-Marine Corps team has a Public Private Venture working that will begin to address the housing shortfall by provid-

ing 588 new homes, but with thousands of families waiting on waiting lists for more than a year, we need to continue these efforts and accelerate the timeline to produce more houses quicker.

Mr. Chairman, we appreciate your interest and support. This concludes my statement. I will be pleased to answer any questions you may have.”

At the end of our statements, the Senators had some questions for us. Below are a few examples of them:

What are the thoughts of Marines on the 1 by 1 rooms?

What is the common criticism of family housing?

Do your present facilities make your troops and civilian workers feel that they are a part of a first-class organization?

Rating from 1 to10, 10 being the best, is the military family-friendly in regards to housing to include benefits, childcare?

As you can hopefully see, there is much interest in the many problems that each service has to endure. The Chairman, Senator James M. Inhofe, R.-Okla., thanked us all for our willingness to tell it like it is and for taking the time to inform him.

Help is on the horizon.